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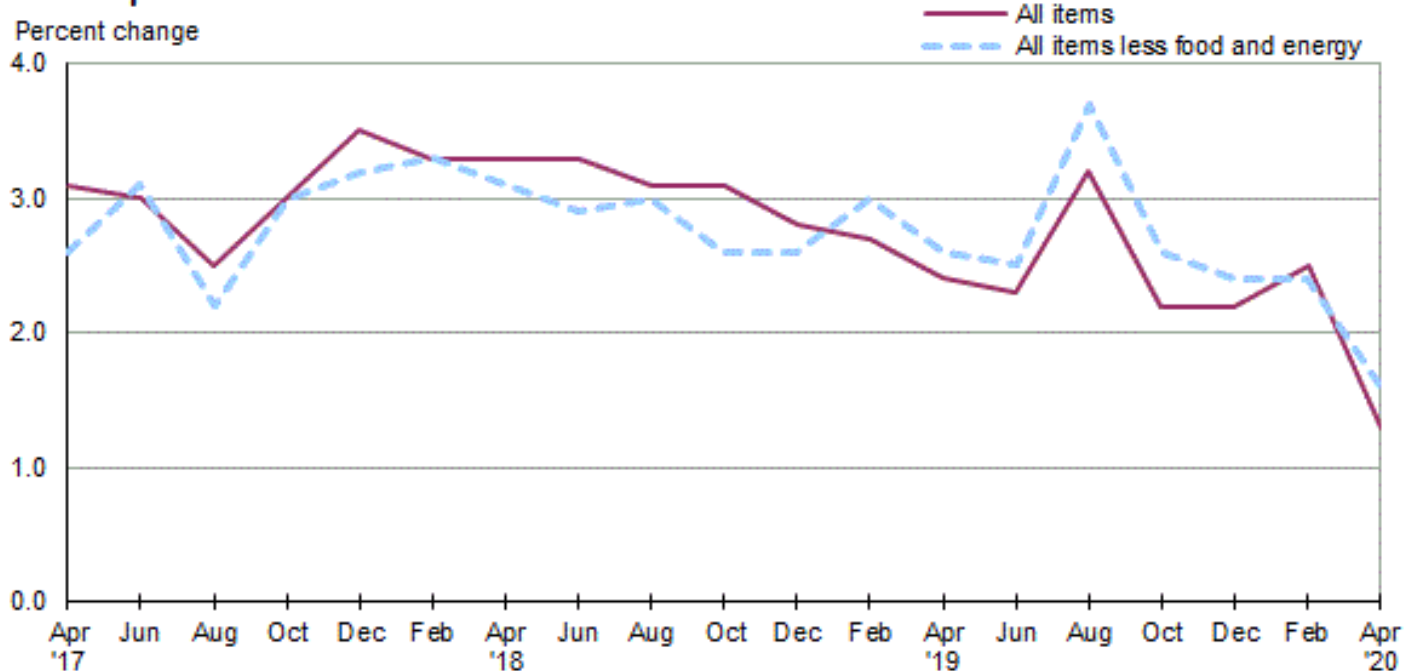
Consumer Price Index, Seattle area — April 2020

Area prices were down 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 1.3 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Seattle area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), declined 0.6 percent for the two months ending in April 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the April decrease was influenced by lower prices for gasoline and apparel. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.3 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.6 percent over the year. Food prices rose 5.2 percent. Energy prices fell 13.9 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, April 2017–April 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices advanced 2.8 percent for the two months ending in April. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home rose 4.1 percent, and prices for food away from home advanced 1.3 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 5.2 percent. Prices for food at home advanced 5.5 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home increased 4.8 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 9.4 percent for the two months ending in April. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-16.7 percent). Prices for electricity rose 1.6 percent, and prices for natural gas service moved up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Energy prices fell 13.9 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-24.0 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service jumped 11.9 percent, and prices for electricity increased 0.4 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.7 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for apparel (-5.1 percent) and recreation (-2.3 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for used cars and trucks (1.8 percent) and medical care (0.3 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.6 percent. Components contributing to the increase included household furnishings and operations (7.4 percent), education and communication (3.4 percent), and shelter (3.1 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in apparel (-9.3 percent) and recreation (-4.1 percent).

Table A. Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
February	0.2	2.2	1.0	3.4	0.8	3.3	0.7	2.7	1.0	2.5
April	1.1	2.5	0.8	3.1	0.8	3.3	0.5	2.4	-0.6	1.3
June	0.9	1.8	0.8	3.0	0.8	3.3	0.7	2.3		
August	0.3	2.1	-0.2	2.5	-0.3	3.1	0.6	3.2		
October	0.0	2.4	0.5	3.0	0.4	3.1	-0.6	2.2		
December	0.0	2.6	0.5	3.5	0.2	2.8	0.3	2.2		

The June 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Seattle area is scheduled to be released on July 14, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on April 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in April was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed. While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at www.bls.gov/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE:Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties in the State of Washington.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	Apr. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	282.115	-	280.484	1.3	-0.6	-
All items (1967=100)	859.996	-	855.025	-	-	-
Food and beverages	280.295	-	286.133	4.4	2.1	-
Food	283.048	-	290.923	5.2	2.8	-
Food at home	257.367	265.932	267.831	5.5	4.1	0.7
Cereals and bakery products	304.120	-	317.045	-0.1	4.2	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	218.083	-	232.225	9.8	6.5	-
Dairy and related products	225.360	-	228.942	7.5	1.6	-
Fruits and vegetables	407.729	-	404.772	0.1	-0.7	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	314.902	-	342.323	12.8	8.7	-
Other food at home	212.268	-	222.158	5.5	4.7	-
Food away from home	322.472	-	326.660	4.8	1.3	-
Food away from home	322.472	-	326.660	4.8	1.3	-
Alcoholic beverages	248.019	-	236.020	-3.1	-4.8	-
Housing	339.051	-	339.029	3.7	0.0	-
Shelter	390.166	388.354	390.109	3.1	0.0	0.5
Rent of primary residence(2)	398.410	399.392	400.789	3.4	0.6	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)(3)	411.441	412.176	413.375	4.3	0.5	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)(2)	411.441	412.176	413.375	4.3	0.5	0.3
Fuels and utilities	278.520	-	280.128	2.8	0.6	-
Household energy	246.638	246.417	249.108	1.9	1.0	1.1
Energy services(2)	291.553	291.679	295.169	2.4	1.2	1.2
Electricity(2)	316.538	316.538	321.535	0.4	1.6	1.6
Utility (piped) gas service(2)	169.458	169.760	169.760	11.9	0.2	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	184.744	-	184.163	7.4	-0.3	-
Apparel	124.623	-	118.257	-9.3	-5.1	-
Transportation	223.400	-	213.554	-5.9	-4.4	-
Private transportation	235.689	-	227.142	-4.8	-3.6	-
New and used motor vehicles(4)	100.091	-	-	-	-	-
New vehicles(1)	202.632	-	-	-	-	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	312.317	-	318.029	-1.1	1.8	-
Motor fuel	345.409	344.333	287.649	-23.9	-16.7	-16.5
Gasoline (all types)	351.963	351.002	293.277	-24.0	-16.7	-16.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	379.619	379.303	315.445	-24.7	-16.9	-16.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	287.582	289.175	246.930	-19.0	-14.1	-14.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	331.088	327.121	278.048	-21.2	-16.0	-15.0
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	576.371	-	576.371	-1.3	0.0	-
Medical care	413.182	-	414.474	2.2	0.3	-
Recreation(6)	97.615	-	95.375	-4.1	-2.3	-
Education and communication(6)	141.822	-	140.886	3.4	-0.7	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,696.176	-	1,682.370	7.8	-0.8	-
Other goods and services	422.569	-	-	-	-	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	282.115	-	280.484	1.3	-0.6	-
Commodities	196.308	-	195.138	0.2	-0.6	-
Commodities less food & beverages	155.809	-	151.509	-2.9	-2.8	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	190.103	-	179.826	-8.3	-5.4	-
Durables	121.347	-	121.876	4.2	0.4	-
Services	362.291	-	360.232	1.9	-0.6	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	Apr. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	276.244	-	274.468	1.3	-0.6	-
All items less shelter.....	240.777	-	238.623	0.3	-0.9	-
Commodities less food	159.452	-	154.822	-3.0	-2.9	-
Nondurables	233.290	-	231.096	-1.1	-0.9	-
Nondurables less food.....	194.817	-	184.417	-7.9	-5.3	-
Services less rent of shelter(3).....	336.992	-	332.799	0.5	-1.2	-
Services less medical care services.....	354.597	-	352.587	2.0	-0.6	-
Energy	303.003	302.338	274.629	-13.9	-9.4	-9.2
All items less energy	283.884	-	283.463	2.2	-0.1	-
All items less food and energy	284.288	-	282.362	1.6	-0.7	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.

(2) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(3) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.